

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A pressure plate assembly for a friction clutch, comprising:

a housing connectable with an abutment arrangement for rotation therewith about an axis of rotation, the housing having an outer axial side and an inner axial side;

a pressure plate mounted in said housing facing said inner axial side such that said pressure plate is rotatable with said housing, said pressure plate having actuating sections extending past a radially outer edge of said housing;

an energy storage element mounted on said outer side of said housing such that said energy storage device exerts an engaging force toward said housing and onto said actuating sections for urging said pressure plate away from said inner axial side;

a plurality of spacer pins arranged on said housing for supporting said energy storage element, each of said spacer pins including a support area at an end facing away from said housing; and

an assembly pretensioning arrangement for holding said energy storage element in a pretensioned assembly position in which the engaging force is prevented from acting on said housing, said assembly pretensioning arrangement including at least one assembly pretensioning element positioned between said energy storage element and said supporting area of said each of said spacer pins so that a force feedback of the energy storage element occurs through the spacer

pins themselves when said energy storage element is in the pretensioned assembly position,
whereby the force feedback is prevented from deforming the housing.

2. -6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) The pressure plate assembly of claim 5 1, wherein said at least one assembly pretensioning element is an open ring-shaped element and is radially deformable for producing and releasing the pretensioned assembly position.

8. (original) The pressure plate assembly of claim 1, wherein said pressure plate assembly is a multi-disk pressure plate assembly further comprising an intermediate plate connected to said housing for rotation with said housing and said pressure plate about said axis of rotation.

9. (currently amended) A process for bringing an energy storage element of a pressure plate assembly of a friction clutch into a pretensioned assembly position and holding the energy storage element in the pretensioned assembly position, the energy storage element being connected on an outer axial side of the housing of the pressure plate assembly, the method including the steps of

exerting a force on the energy storage element to bring the energy storage element to a state of deformation which produces an intermediate space between the energy storage element and a support area of a carrier element spacer pin which supports the energy storage element on the housing;

inserting at least one assembly pretensioning element into the intermediate space;
and

releasing the energy storage element so that it the energy storage element arrives
in the pretensioned assembly position against the at least one assembly pretensioning element
and so that a force feedback of the energy storage element occurs through the spacer pins
themselves, whereby the force feedback is prevented from deforming the housing.

10. (currently amended) In a pressure plate assembly having a housing connectable with an abutment arrangement for rotation therewith about an axis of rotation, the housing having an outer axial side and an inner axial side, a pressure plate mounted in said housing facing said inner axial side such that said pressure plate is rotatable with said housing, said pressure plate having actuating sections extending past a radially outer edge of said housing, and an energy storage element mounted on said outer side of said housing such that said energy storage device exerts a force toward said housing on said actuating sections for urging said pressure plate away from said inner axial side, and a plurality of spacer pins arranged on said housing for supporting said energy storage element, each of said spacer pins including a support area at an end facing away from said housing, an assembly pretensioning element comprising a ring-shaped pretensioning body with a break in its circumference, the break allowing the assembly pretensioning element to be radially deformed to produce and to release the a pretensioned assembly state, said assembly pretensioning element being positionable between said energy storage device and said supporting area of said each of said spacer pins in the pretensioned assembly state so that a force feedback of the energy storage device occurs through

the spacer pins themselves when said energy storage element is in a pretensioned assembly position, whereby the force feedback is prevented from deforming the housing.

11. (original) The assembly pretensioning element of claim 10, further comprising handle formations at ends next to the break in the circumference to facilitate the radial deformation.

12. (original) The assembly pretensioning element of claim 10, wherein said assembly pretensioning element is made of wire.